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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 18, 2016

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MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES RENOVATION AND MODERNIZATION OF WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. LIBRARY

Mayor Rahm Emanuel and Chicago Public Library Commissioner Brian Bannon today joined Alderman Roderick Sawyer (6th) to announce the complete renovation and modernization of the Whitney M. Young, Jr. Library, 7901 S. King Drive. The nearly \$12 million investment will be managed by the Public Building Commission (PBC) and will incorporate the exterior walls of the existing structure into the envelope of the new building.

"Libraries are a place to read, learn, discover, and explore, which is what makes them fixtures in communities across the city," said Mayor Emanuel. "Whether it's new educational opportunities for youth or the modernization of a branch like Whitney Young, we are going to make sure our libraries continue to grow so they can help our communities grow as well."

The new branch will provide the neighborhood with a modern library space that continues to serve as an essential community anchor, providing critical services and resources to meet a variety of local needs. Features will include an early learning center for children, a YOUmedia digital media lab for teens, additional seating, new state-of-the-art furniture and equipment, additional meeting and study spaces, refreshed collections, ADA accessibility throughout the building and a computer commons that will add computer capacity.

Renovation plans include a 3,000-5,000 square foot expansion, bringing the branch to 14,000-16,000 square feet. The building will be retrofit for energy efficient mechanical systems and improved lighting.

"We are thrilled to offer the community this much-needed and highly anticipated branch," said Commissioner Brian Bannon. "The expanded building will include more flexible space to meet the needs of all ages."

Additionally, the new branch will have digital skills training available to patrons of any age through the Library's CyberNavigator program, which recently expanded to every neighborhood in the city through the Connect Chicago initiative.

The Chicago Public Library is working in collaboration with the Cook Chicago Workforce Partnership to design targeted workforce development services to be available at the new. The new Whitney Young Library is expected to be complete in 2018.

This is the first in what will be a number of library development projects and underscores major programmatic news from Chicago Public Library last week - including the expansion of early learning centers in libraries and the expansion of digital literacy training to nearly every library in Chicago.

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